

REMARKS

This is a complete response to the outstanding Final Office Action mailed November 24, 2009. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. Claims 1-12 were previously pending in this application. Claims 1-12. As a result, claims 1-12 are pending for examination with claims 1 and 6 being independent claims. No new matter has been added.

35 USC §102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 and 6-10 as being anticipated by the US patent publication to Datta. Applicant traverses this rejection. The cited reference discloses a system whereby each node 102 is connected by means of data path 104 to a local area network 106. This is the only physical connection provided to each of the local area knows. The cited reference requires at minimum a centralized controller and then subsequently a router for each path 112 to the wide area network or Internet 114.

In contrast, claim 1, as presently amended, recites in relevant part:

"said originating terminal coupled by means of a local area

network to each of said plurality of terminals" and "each of said first plurality of terminals (110a, 110b, 110c and 110d) having an associated, direct, wide area network connection to the Internet, said associated, direct, wide area network connection to the Internet of a first one of said first plurality of terminals in the local area network different from an associated, direct, wide area network connection to the Internet of the remainder of said first plurality of terminals in the local area network".

Independent Claim 6 has similar language.

Thus, as presently amended, the independent claims recite that not only are each of the terminals coupled to one another by means of a local area network but moreover and more portly, they are each coupled to the wide-area network/intranet by means of a respective associated, direct wide area network connection that is different from that used by another terminal. This is illustrated by connections 120, figure 1 in the present application. Accordingly, such a structure and methodology is not disclosed or made obvious by Datta alone or in combination with Gray, Barron or Zahao as recited by the examiner in making the obviousness rejections of claims 4, 5, 11 and 12 respectively.

If the controller in Datta were to be implemented in such a decentralized way on the nodes (i.e. the terminals) as described in Datta then a significant difference between that disclosure and the claimed invention is that the controller of Datta distributes the data amongst separate routers coupled to the WAN whereas in the claimed invention, the terminals distribute data amongst a set of other terminals in a LAN, each of which then has its own separate, different and direct WAN connection.

The Examiner has hinted that there are a number of features that might help distinguish over the disclosure of Datta if the claims were clarified. Accordingly, applicants have adopted some of the examiner's suggestions. Applicant has also included a "such that" clause to the effect that the invention allows one terminal to share the bandwidth of the WAN connections maintained by the other terminals.

Datta does not provide any disclosure or suggestion of each of the plurality of terminals being able to connect directly and independently to the Internet or that each terminal has the ability to divide a request into a plurality of packets and distribute them over the local area network for subsequent distribution over separate, direct connections to a wide area

network. Furthermore there is no disclosure in Datta of distributing the packets first over the local area network, rather in Datta the packets are distributed via separate connections 210 rather than via the local area network 106 because in Datta the plurality of routers are separate from the plurality of nodes. In this manner, the present invention claims and discloses that the separate associated wide area connections of each terminal allow the originating terminal to share the bandwidth of the separate associated wide area connections of the plurality of terminals.

Accordingly, Applicant believes that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's Attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith to our Deposit Account No. 02-

In re: Paul Andrew Evans
Filed: February 2, 2007
Serial No.: 10/567,734
Page 13

3285, under Docket Number DUMMETT-043XX.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 4-03-10